

N62604.AR.000169
NCBC GULFPORT
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NEWS RELEASE FROM U S AIR FORCE REGARDING ADVENT OF SOIL SAMPLING FOR
DIOXIN NCBC GULFPORT MS
1/7/1985
U S AIR FORCE



United States Air Force

HQ AIR FORCE ENGINEERING AND SERVICES CENTER OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
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News Release

7 Jan 85

AIR FORCE BEGINS SOIL SAMPLING AT FORMER AGENT ORANGE STORAGE SITE

HQ., AFESC, TYNDALL AFB, Fla. -- Soil sampling began today to determine locations and levels of dioxin contamination from minor spills at a former Air Force agent orange storage site at the Naval Construction Battalion Center, Gulfport, Miss.

Sampling, performed by a civilian contractor under the direction of Air Force scientists, will continue for approximately six weeks, with results expected in June. The project, part of a \$1.7 million research and development program, will define the areas of contamination and produce an accurate mapping of exact spill locations and levels.

Results of the research project at the Naval base, and two other former storage sites, will be used to find the most efficient, cost-effective method for complete clean-up, not merely containing the contamination. The other sites involved are at Eglin AFB, Ft. Walton Beach, Fla., and Johnston Island, in the Pacific.

This summer, Air Force scientists from the Air Force Engineering and Services Center's laboratory at Tyndall AFB, Panama City, Fla., will schedule demonstrations of various technologies designed to allow total reclamation of the land at all three sites. The Engineering and Services Center's laboratory is responsible for the Air Force Environmental Quality Program, developing methods and techniques to detect and abate the impact of pollutants which have or may result

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SOIL SAMPLING

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from the deployment of Air Force systems.

The Air Force stored the herbicide orange (a defoliant used in Vietnam) at the Navy base in the 70's. More than 17,000 55-gallon drums were safely incinerated in 1977, aboard the incineration ship Vulcanus. The small spills, most measuring less than six inches in diameter, resulted from leakage of the drums during storage, and minor spills while moving the drums and pumping the chemical into large tanks for transportation to the ship.

The area has been monitored continuously by the Air Force. It is not used, and is fenced and posted off-limits.

The Air Force will continue to monitor and sample the area, as well as nearby Turkey Creek, in addition to the research project now underway. So far, the Air Force sampling has revealed no health threat to nearby communities or wildlife.